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AIR FORCE



ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT: CONCEPT, PROCESS,
AND APPLICATIONS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

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<p>This paper describes the values, methodology, and effectiveness of Organization Development (OD), especially in the Department of Defense. General conditions for the success or failure of OD are discussed, and specific intervention techniques are reviewed. OD programs most likely to succeed focus on the whole organization, and are task-oriented, supported by top-level management, and based on the Team Building intervention technique. Applications of OD in the Air Force and the Army have been successful in the short run, but have not been sustained because of declining management support and personnel turnover. <i>Keywords:</i></p>					
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ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT: CONCEPT, PROCESS, AND APPLICATIONS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

I. INTRODUCTION

Organization Development (OD) is an educational process designed to change the character or "culture" of an organization and to improve organizational performance. Tied closely to American society's increasing concern for the welfare of the worker, OD evolved about 1957 as an attempt to apply some of the values and insights of behavioral scientists to total organizations. Many individuals have contributed to the movement, and their contributions are enumerated by Eberspacher (1973) and by French and Bell (1973).

Although OD has been in existence for over 30 years, discussions among professionals and laymen alike have led to disagreement as to precisely what it is and what it entails. There is also some question as to its effectiveness. This paper reviews the OD concept, the process it involves, its effectiveness, and its application, particularly in the Department of Defense (DOD). The results of this review should be especially useful to managers in the DOD who are contemplating using OD or who are merely wondering what OD is all about.

II. THE OD CONCEPT

Definition. French and Bell (1973) defined OD as:

. . . a long-range effort to improve an organization's problem-solving and renewal processes, particularly through a more effective and collaborative management of organization culture--with special emphasis on the culture of formal work teams--with the assistance of a change agent, or catalyst, and the use of the theory and technology of applied behavioral science, including action research (p. 14).

All definitions of OD emphasize that it is a planned long-term effort to change the managerial behavior and performance of an organization. Most stress that it is a planned process of "cultural change." This means that OD is intended to change the system of beliefs and values of the organization, to integrate individual and organizational objectives, and to improve an organization's problem-solving and renewal capabilities. These changes are brought about with the assistance of a consultant who helps the organization help itself, primarily through the establishment of organizational teams.

Characteristics. Unique characteristics of the OD process are: (a) It involves the whole organization, not just a few individuals or groups; (b) it is intended to improve organizational functioning, as well as traditional output; (c) it works on both the processes and structures of the system--where processes include communications, influence, and goal setting, and structures comprise the organizational hierarchy; and (d) it consists of planned change, not random tinkering with organizational processes and structures (Frohman & Sashkin, 1970).

Organization Development is not management development. OD is concerned with developing or changing the climate or culture in which all employees work, rather than simply developing managers per se, as is the case in management development (Burke, 1971). Management development and OD are not incompatible, however. In fact, management development is one of several OD techniques that might be used in an overall OD effort. A principal difference is that OD is a continuing process of looking for ways (e.g., management development) of improving the manner in

which organizational systems are functioning, whereas management development is usually a program with a beginning and an end.

The most salient characteristic of the OD process is that it is a planned effort to change an organization's culture. As noted by Burke (1971), ". . . although persons may be involved in events that are properly labeled OD technology, such activities are not considered Organizational Development if they are not part of a planned effort at changing the organization's culture" (p. 570). "Culture" in this context refers to a way of life, a system of beliefs and values, and the accepted form of interacting and relating within the organization.

Values. A specific set of values or beliefs about people are associated with OD (French & Bell, 1984). These values concern the nature of man and his work in an organizational context. In essence, the OD practitioner imposes these values on the organization he is attempting to change. These values, or basic assumptions about people which underlie programs for OD, are similar to the Theory Y assumptions espoused by the late Douglas McGregor (1960), and are also compatible with Abraham Maslow's (1970) view of man. Fundamental to Maslow's philosophy is the belief that there is a hierarchy of human needs, and that ultimately man seeks self-fulfillment through the development of powers and skills and a chance to be creative. McGregor's philosophy embraces the notions that: (a) work is natural to man; (b) man can exercise self-direction and self-control toward objectives to which he is committed; (c) commitment to objectives is a function of the rewards associated with their achievement; (d) under the proper conditions, man seeks responsibility; (e) the traits of imagination, creativity, and ingenuity are widely distributed in the population and can be used in the solution of organizational problems; and (f) under the conditions of modern industrial life, the intellectual potential of the average human being is only partially utilized (Dale, 1973, p. 428).

A contrasting point of view regarding the nature of man is contained in McGregor's Theory X. It holds that people cannot be trusted, and prefer to be controlled by and dependent upon management for all actions. Which view is correct--the Theory Y view or the Theory X view--is, scientifically, a moot point. It may be important, however, for the OD practitioner to hold the Theory Y view of mankind if the OD efforts are to be successful. The actions involved in the OD process call for this humanistic philosophy, and a hypocritical application will likely prove unsuccessful. As French (1974) has stated, ". . . the belief that people are important tends to result in their being important. The belief that people can grow and develop in terms of personal and organizational competency tends to produce this result. Thus, values and beliefs tend to be self-fulfilling . . ." (p. 669). Acceptance of this optimistic point of view does not deny reality or the existence of everyday organizational problems. It may, however, provide the necessary attitude for instituting change.

What might be called the basic values of OD have been listed by Argyris (1964), French (1974), Margulies and Raia (1972), and others. As stated by Margulies and Raia (1972), the values encompass the following notions:

1. Providing opportunities for people to function as human beings rather than as resources in the productive process.
2. Providing opportunities for each organization member, as well as for the organization itself, to develop his full potential.
3. Seeking to increase the effectiveness of the organization in terms of all of its goals.
4. Attempting to create an environment in which it is possible to find exciting and challenging work.

5. Providing opportunities for people in organizations to influence the way in which they relate to work, the organization, and the environment.

6. Treating each human being as a person with a complex set of needs, all of which are important in his work and in his life (p. 3).

Golembiewski (1969) expressed what he called "the basic premise of OD," which incorporates the overall OD value system reflected above: "When individuals can meet their own needs while meeting organizational needs, output will be qualitatively and quantitatively best" (p. 368).

OD Objectives. The objectives or anticipated end results of the OD process are generally agreed upon by OD theorists and practitioners alike, and clearly reflect the values of OD. In actuality, it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between OD values and OD objectives. This fact further substantiates the earlier claim that the OD practitioner imposes the OD value system upon the organization he or she is attempting to change.

Many lists of OD objectives have been published. For example, six objectives have been named by Bennis (1969, p. 15); seven, by French (1969, p. 32); and nine, by Golembiewski (1969, p. 368). Although the lists overlap, seven central objectives emerge:

1. To increase the level of trust and support among organizational members.
2. To increase the incidence of confrontation of organizational problems, both within groups and among groups, in contrast to "sweeping problems under the rug."
3. To develop a reward system which recognizes both the achievement of the organization's mission (profits or service) and organization development (growth of people).
4. To increase the level of self and group responsibility in planning and implementation.
5. To increase the level of personal enthusiasm and satisfaction in the organization.
6. To create an environment in which authority of assigned role is augmented by authority based on knowledge and skill.
7. To create an open, problem-solving climate throughout the organization.

A comparison of this list of objectives with the list of values cited earlier illustrates the point that OD values and objectives are intertwined. Examination of each list also reveals that OD authors emphasize the humanistic values of OD rather than increased organizational effectiveness and productivity. The dual purpose of OD should not be ignored, however. The practical-minded businessman who hires an OD consultant does so not merely to create a better work environment or organizational culture, but because he also expects increased productivity or a more effective business as a byproduct. As mentioned, the basic premise of OD is that when workers can meet their own needs and those of the organization simultaneously, output will be qualitatively and quantitatively better.

III. THE OD PROCESS

An OD Model. A frequent strategy applied in starting an OD program is based on what some behavioral scientists call an action research model. This model involves collaboration between an OD consultant and the organization in gathering data, discussing the data, and planning. The

consultant serves as a sort of "organizational psychotherapist" who helps the organization help itself. Key aspects of the model (although the terminology varies from author to author) are data gathering, diagnosis, feedback to the organization, discussion of the data by the organization, work by the organization, planning, and intervention. The model is iterative in that the process is intended to be repeated continuously throughout the life of the organization, as needed.

Data Gathering and Diagnosis. The type of data to be collected and the data collection method to be used are chosen by a consultant based upon time available, costs, needs of the organization, and the nature of the organization. Data may be collected by interview (Cannell & Kahn, 1953), questionnaire (Goode & Hatt, 1952), or observation (Sellitz, Jahode, Deutsch, & Cook, 1959), and may relate to norms and values of the organization, attitudes of employees, morale, communication flow, decision-making processes, or any technical or administrative aspect of the organization.

Interviews are frequently used for OD data gathering because personal contact builds a cooperative relationship between the consultant and the client-organization. The interview is particularly useful to the behavioral-scientist consultant who is interested in spontaneity and expressed feelings as well as cognitive matters. A typical question asked during an interview might be: "What problems do you note in your group, including problems among people, that are interfering with getting the job done the way you would like to have it done?" Most often, the initial OD interview is with the key executive of the organization, after which interviews are conducted at lower levels. Obtaining cooperation from the key executive is an important first step in ensuring the success of the OD program.

Following data collection, the consultant performs an organizational diagnosis in which the focus is on identifying ways to improve the technical, administrative, and personal-cultural interactions of the organization. This is accomplished by examining interpersonal and intergroup relationships, decision-making processes, and communication flows. When the diagnosis is completed, the consultant recommends specific techniques for intervening in the organization. Intervention is used to institute planned changes in any subsystem of the organization: the technical, the administrative, or the personal-cultural. OD can begin with changes in any or all of these areas.

Intervention Techniques. Investigators have described a variety of intervention techniques useful for OD. For instance, French and Bell (1984) have named 13 "families" or types of intervention; Margulies and Raia (1972), four; Burke (1971), five; and Bowers, Franklin, and Pecorella (1973), twenty-six. There is much overlap among the techniques named by the different authors, but a detailed comparison and sorting out are not worthwhile. It should be noted, though, that some techniques are broader than others and include in their procedures some of the less extensive techniques named by other investigators. Typically, not just one but many intervention techniques are employed in most OD programs, and their application is often unique to the organization under study.

One of the more recent and detailed descriptions of intervention techniques is offered by French and Bell (1984), who also described 5 categories of intervention:

1. Team Interventions: designed to help individuals perform more effectively in groups (e.g., role analysis).
2. Intergroup Interventions: designed to bring about harmony between work groups (e.g., team building).

3. Personal, Interpersonal, and Group Process Interventions: focus on the diagnosis and management of personal, interpersonal, and group processes such as sensitivity training and transactional analysis.

4. Comprehensive Interventions: consist of total organizational interventions such as confrontation meetings, survey feedback, and Grid OD as described below; involve all managers of the organization.

5. Structural Interventions: aimed at improving organization effectiveness through changes in the tasks and structure of the organization (e.g., job enrichment, management by objectives (MBO), job design, and quality circles).

All these techniques are interrelated; however, they differ as to the target group upon which they focus. "Process" and "structural" interventions are given special attention by French and Bell (1984), who elaborate on differences between the two techniques and provide details for practical application.

One of the most thorough OD intervention techniques is Grid OD, as designed by Blake and Mouton (1969) and their associates (Blake, Mouton, Barnes, & Greiner, 1964). The program has six phases, which take from 3 to 5 years to implement, and employs an organizational change model involving the total organization. The unique characteristic of the model is the "managerial grid," a matrix which depicts various types of management styles. "Concern for People" is on the Y-axis, and "Concern for Production" is on the X-axis. Each axis is scaled from 1 through 9, with 9 representing "high" concern. A manager's behavior may be depicted on this matrix and characterized by two numbers. The first reflects concern for production and the second concern for people. For example, a 1,9 manager has low concern for production and high concern for people. This management style would probably lead to a friendly organizational atmosphere, but less-than-optimum production. Blake holds that people and production concerns are complementary, and that their integration through the management process would optimize both.

Which management style is best depends on the situation. Blake and Mouton have reported that 99.5% of the participants in their Grid OD programs say that a 9,9 style is the best way to manage. The second most popular style is a 9,1 and the third is 5,5; however, they recommend using the style that works best (Hodgetts, 1979, p. 353).

Phases 1 and 2 of Grid OD are referred to as "management development"; Phases 3 through 6 constitute "organization development." Phase 1, Laboratory-Seminar Training, consists of a 1-week seminar designed to upgrade individual managers' skills and leadership abilities. It teaches them concepts and gives them insights into their own managerial style, how teams work, problems of communication in organizations, intergroup relations, and the processes of goal setting and planning. This training is concerned with individual and group behavior only as it relates to the job of managing. Personalities and emotional predispositions are not a matter of concern, except as they relate to, and are a part of, the overt management style. In this way, Grid training differs from T-group or classic sensitivity training, which often goes beyond job enrichment in its analysis of problems.

Phase 2 is an extension of Phase 1 and involves team development on the job. That is, what was learned in Phase 1 is practiced on the job. Ideally, the candor and openness that were established in Phase 1 become the daily operating style during Phase 2.

Phase 3 involves intergroup development and the identification and resolution of areas of conflict and tension. An attempt is made to establish links between managers who head the

various departments and to help managers achieve overall organizational goals which transcend departmental goals.

Phase 4, called "organizational goal setting," involves only the top management policy-making team. Goals relate to cost control, profit improvement, labor relations, and promotion policies.

Phase 5, which is called "goal attainment," may extend over a period of several years. The focus of this phase is on problem solving and designating task forces. The task forces cut across traditional organizational lines and are responsible for developing and implementing solutions to any problems associated with goal achievement.

Phase 6, the stabilization phase, is primarily a time of taking stock and critiquing the mistakes and inadequacies of earlier phases. It also involves identifying areas of success and making plans to reinforce these strong points, so they become a way of life in the organization.

Taken as a whole, intervention techniques may be viewed as efforts (a) to develop work teams; (b) to improve intergroup relationships; (c) to improve planning and goal-setting processes for individuals, teams, and larger groups; and (d) to develop and conduct educational activities for upgrading the knowledge, skills, and abilities of key personnel at all levels. Whatever the strategy or intervention technique employed, OD almost always concentrates on values, attitudes, relations, and organizational climate--the people variables--as a point of entry, rather than on the goals, structures, and technologies of the organization.

IV. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF OD

One of the difficulties in assessing the effectiveness of OD programs is that there are few good measures of organizational effectiveness. Assessment is particularly difficult in the case of "knowledge work" organizations such as staff or research and development (R&D) activities where reliance must be placed on questionnaires and personal interviews, both of which have numerous shortcomings. Difficulties also arise in making evaluations based on controlled experimental comparisons. These difficulties revolve around matching experimental and control groups, determining what degree of change was due to the intervention technique and how much was due to other factors. Additionally, when several intervention techniques are used simultaneously in an organization, it becomes even more difficult to assess their relative effectiveness. Despite these difficulties, a number of OD evaluations have been conducted successfully.

Effectiveness of Intervention Techniques. Porras and Berg (1978b), for example, found that Grid OD, Task-Oriented Laboratory Training, and Survey Feedback--in that order--had the greatest positive impact on the outcome variables measured. They also found that the use of multiple intervention approaches and either short (4 to 6 months) or long (25 or more months) programs seemed to produce the greatest amount of positive change.

Bowers (1971) compared six intervention techniques by surveying over 17,000 respondents in 23 organizations in 10 companies. The surveys were administered both before and after the intervention techniques were applied. His major findings were: (a) Survey Feedback (data from employee questionnaires fed back to supervisors) was associated with a significant improvement in organizational functioning; (b) Interpersonal Process Consultation (group discussions of interpersonal matters) was associated with questionable improvement; (c) Interpersonal Task Consultation (group discussions of task matters) was associated with little or no change; and (d) Laboratory Training (off-site family T-group design) was associated with significant deterioration in organizational functioning. A principal difference between Interpersonal

Process Consultation and Laboratory Training was that in Laboratory Training, the consultant played a less active role in providing information to the group during discussions.

Bowers attributed the success of the Survey Feedback technique in improving organizational functioning (improved climate, leadership, and worker satisfaction) to three factors: (a) Survey Feedback tends to "fan out" through the organization, resulting in greater awareness of problems among personnel; (b) it provides a permanent, believable, written record of organizational problems which is very effective in inducing workers to change their behavior; and (c) it is more relevant to the workers than are the other "more peculiar" techniques. Bowers admits these conclusions are speculative, but offers rationale for their acceptance.

One reason that Interpersonal Process Consultation and Laboratory Training techniques were not more effective may be that they emphasized interpersonal problems too much and task-oriented problems too little. Greiner (1972) has suggested that many OD programs fail for this reason. He recommends that OD advocates strive for a better understanding of how task demands influence the behavioral process, rather than the other way around. However, Interpersonal Task Consultation, which did focus on task matters, did not fare much better by Bowers' standards.

Undoubtedly, the effectiveness of an intervention technique is highly dependent upon the skill of the consultant in selecting and applying the intervention technique. Effectiveness is also dependent upon the conditions and attitudes of the client-organization, as described in the following section.

Conditions for Success and Failure. French (1974), Greiner (1967), and Beckhard (1969, p. 97) have listed several conditions leading to the success and failure of OD programs. Conditions for success, according to Beckhard, are: pressure for change; strategic people "hurting" and willing to diagnose the problem; collaborative problem identification between line and staff people; willingness to take risks in forming new relationships; a long-term perspective; willingness to change the situation based on data gathered; rewards for the effort of changing; and tangible intermediate results.

Conditions for failure include: discrepancy between top management's statement of values and styles and their actual management behavior; much activity but no solid change goals; overdependence on outside help or inside specialists; a gap between goals of top management and goals of middle management; misapplication of intervention techniques; and confusing good relationships with successful OD.

Overall Effectiveness. Based on evaluations conducted by Porras and Berg (1978b), Margulies, Wright, and Scholl (1977), Dunn and Swierczek (1977), Nicholas (1982), and Golembiewski, Proehl, and Sink (1982), French and Bell (1984) concluded that ". . . organizational development is a viable strategy for organizational improvement." They further stated that "It appears from these studies that there is considerable evidence to suggest that OD works" (p. 305).

The evidence for OD is not overwhelming, however. Porras and Berg (1978a) concluded that: OD does not seem to make people happier and more satisfied; group process variables change less than half the time they are measured; OD does not seem to have an important impact on the overall organizational process--only on individuals; and T-groups, encounter groups, and sensitivity training groups result in the lowest percentage of reported change.

Given these mixed reviews, it is not possible to give a definitive assessment of the overall effectiveness of OD; however, most authors do agree that OD produces positive organizational effects given a good consultant, top management support, and a clear understanding of organizational problems at all levels of management. It is also necessary to have prompt and effective procedures for solving those problems.

V. APPLICATIONS OF OD IN THE DOD

This section examines two applications of OD in the Department of Defense (DOD) and highlights some of the problems encountered in applying OD and objectively assessing its effectiveness. The programs were carried out in the Air Force and the Army in the early 1970s.

Air Force Application. An early application of OD in the DOD was at the Air Force Materials Laboratory (AFML) at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio. The idea originated in August 1971, when the entire AFML Management Team, including the Director, Deputy Director, Chief Scientist, Division Chiefs, and Staff Office Chiefs, participated in a 1-week OD seminar at the Federal Executive Institute (FEI), Charlottesville, Virginia. The AFML Management Team wanted to make more effective use of its manpower, and they came away from the seminar convinced that OD would be a good tool for achieving this result. The effort was strongly supported by the Laboratory Director, who had been introduced to OD in 1969 at the FEI's in-residence Executive Education Course, and was also strongly supported by another high-ranking member of AFML who studied OD while on a Sloan Fellowship at Stanford University. Thus, the program had high-level support--a key ingredient for OD success.

The OD program began with the selection of two outside consultants from among several who visited the Laboratory. Next, all Division Chiefs and Staff Heads and the Laboratory Director met together at the FEI for 1 week, during which a team development session was held. This session was the first step in the formal training of what was called the Laboratory "Executive Group." Subsequently other teams received similar training, but not at FEI. Division Chiefs met with Branch Chiefs, and in some cases, Branch Chiefs met with Branch members.

The short-range goal of the OD program was to establish an effective top-level management team. The long-term goals on behalf of the organization were: (a) to reduce or eliminate dysfunctional competition, (b) to improve communications, (c) to increase the use of goals and objectives, (d) to establish uniform decision making with maximum decentralization, and (e) to enhance the career development of AFML personnel.

Evaluation of the OD program was performed by a student from the Air Force Institute of Technology at Wright-Patterson AFB (Trask, 1973). To measure the effectiveness of OD in accomplishing the five long-term OD goals, he administered a questionnaire to all AFML personnel. The questionnaire was administered 2 years after the OD program began; thus, there was no "Before" questionnaire with which to compare the answers. This problem was overcome by having respondents provide two answers to each question, a "Before OD" answer and an "After OD" answer. The Before answer was an estimate as to how respondents thought they would have answered the question before the OD program began. For example, a respondent would signify by one answer the degree to which he or she received timely information from the supervisor before OD and after OD. Although this procedure relies greatly on the respondent's memory, it has been accepted and used by several senior behavioral scientists (Likert, 1967). Certainly it is better to have an estimated Before answer than no answer at all.

Of the 325 questionnaires distributed by Trask, 208 were returned and 183 (56%) were useable. Results showed that of 19 goal-related questions, all showed a Before-After change, indicating progress toward the five desired goals. Respondents thought that since OD began, there was less dysfunctional competition, better communications, an increased use of goals and objectives in the Laboratory, improved decision-making procedures, and better personnel management and development. These results were achieved principally through the use of the Team Development intervention technique.

Analysis of three questions related to attitudes suggested that AFML personnel, in general,

were neutral toward OD, but that personnel who participated in the OD program viewed OD more favorably than those who had not participated. Also, OD improved the job satisfaction of most OD participants, but decreased the job satisfaction of some non-participants. Participants were upper management personnel and their management teams; non-participants were lower-level scientific and engineering personnel.

According to Trask, the emphasis on upper-level managers was a shortcoming of that OD program. He felt that the program was not systematically applied and that there was a belated and incomplete application to lower levels. As a result, dysfunctional competition decreased and communications increased only among OD participants. In short, improvements--as reflected in the questionnaire answers--were noted primarily by the OD participants.

In response to Trask's comments regarding non-systematic application of the OD program, Vossler and Krochmel (undated) of AFML asserted that the initial focus of OD on upper-level management was quite proper. They stated that the extent of initial management participation was largely determined by the nature of the original program goals. Although everyone in AFML had a stake in these goals, ". . . the impetus for initial movement in the desired direction resided individually and collectively with the managers" (p. 9). Thus, strong involvement of upper management was dictated. AFML then shifted emphasis to lower levels of AFML, a step which could not have been taken without strong upper management support.

In October 1988, OD was still in evidence at AFML, but at a low level. Mr. Krochmel presently serves as an internal OD consultant at the Air Force Wright Aeronautical Laboratories (AFWAL), the parent organization of the Materials Laboratory. AFWAL offers training programs quarterly, and offers internal and external consultation to branch chiefs and division chiefs on a by-request basis. Individual consultation on personal matters and third-party conflict resolution services are also offered. External consultants are brought in as needed from the National Training Institute in Washington, DC.

Although the OD program at AFWAL continues to serve informally as a vehicle for organizational change, not everyone within AFWAL has accepted the value of OD. As in other organizations, some managers are not people-oriented and prefer to manage in their own way. They do not believe in developing people; rather, they expect the "cream to rise to the top." However, high-level management at the Aeronautical Systems Division (ASD), the parent organization for AFWAL, presently supports OD (principally Quality Circles); thus, efforts to increase productivity and product quality are expected to increase. The writings of Deming (1982) and the concept of Total Quality Management have been instrumental in this recent ASD emphasis. The effects of Quality Circles in other DOD organizations have been mixed (Steel & Lloyd, 1988; Steel, Mento, Dilla, Ovalle, & Lloyd, 1985).

Army Application. About the same time that AFML initiated its OD program, the Army Military Personnel Center (MILPERCEN) initiated a contract with the System Development Corporation (SDC) to determine if OD methods were suitable for application in the MILPERCEN and other large, complex Army agencies (Department of the Army, 1974). There was no coordination between MILPERCEN and AFML in conducting the two programs.

The 1-year MILPERCEN program consisted of three phases: a diagnostic phase, a developmental phase, and an evaluation phase. During the diagnostic phase, information was gathered about MILPERCEN. SDC consultants used three methods for gathering information: individual interviews with key managers, group meetings with a variety of workers and supervisory personnel, and an attitude survey administered to all MILPERCEN members working in the Washington area. The entire MILPERCEN organization was the target of the diagnostic phase, and was diagnosed as a system growing at its own pace and consisting of interdependent parts and functions.

Phase 2, the developmental phase, involved implementing six intervention techniques, or developmental activities, as SDC refers to them. These were:

1. Intern Training Program. This activity involved training 15 military and civilian members of the MILPERCEN to serve as interns; i.e., as internal consultants and proponents of OD. They served during the period of the SDC contract, and were expected to provide a sustaining OD capability when the contract ended. The intern training focused on teaching self-awareness, intra-group processes, intergroup dynamics, and organizational diagnosis.

2. Action/Planning Workshops. This activity consisted of management conferences and management/worker conferences which concentrated on improving the internal environment of the MILPERCEN. For the latter, groups of workers identified problems and solutions, and presented them to management in open sessions; a Senior Management Team responded within a week. Those workshops involving only managers focused on examining organizational structures, functions, and job content.

3. Group Dynamics Training. This training program was designed to help line managers learn and apply group approaches to planning, communications, and problem solving within their respective organizational elements. A series of weekly, 2-hour training sessions were conducted over a period of 14 weeks.

4. Communications Planning Model. This activity involved implementation of a model designed to increase the interaction between military and civilian supervisors; to build greater organizational cohesiveness; to improve morale; and to develop a sense of teamwork among organizational members. The activity was conducted primarily by MILPERCEN interns serving as consultants to line managers.

5. Job Design. This process involved groups of 6 to 10 workers meeting periodically to discuss work-related issues and to design better ways of getting their work done. The intent was to enrich the quality of life for workers whose jobs relegated them to highly routine and monotonous functions.

6. Team Building. This was a task-oriented activity that focused on organizational issues and problems. A group consisting of a manager and the people who reported directly to that manager set work goals, planned steps to meet them, and evaluated results. An SDC consultant helped them examine interpersonal relationships. The activity differed from T-group training in many dimensions which are discussed fully in the SDC account of the study (Department of the Army, 1974).

The evaluation phase consisted of gathering interview data from four different sources: key line managers, participants in the developmental activities, interns, and SDC consultants. All were asked to assess each developmental activity (intervention technique) against joint goals previously set by MILPERCEN and SDC. An attempt was also made to measure changes in MILPERCEN productivity that may have resulted from the OD interventions. However, it was not possible to derive accurate measures of productivity; so, this effort was dropped. Another evaluation activity undertaken was tracking specific organizational improvement plans which evolved from the team building and job design efforts. A measure of commitment to the recommendations which resulted from the OD process was obtained in this manner.

Results of the evaluation phase are discussed in detail by SDC; only the highlights are summarized here:

1. The Intern Program was effective, but there was some conflict between the interns' regular job responsibilities and their OD activities.

2. The Action Planning Workshops produced a number of organizational improvements. Feedback from the worker level to management was helpful, and group problem solving was effective at both the worker and management levels.

3. Group Dynamics Training resulted in learning, which was applied on the job. Participants reported improved communications, higher morale, and improved problem solving. Many participants desired ongoing involvement in OD activities. However, it was learned that involving people in OD activities by mandate runs the risk of high resistance.

4. The Communications Planning Model activity improved the organization's capability to identify and solve problems, and it improved and increased the exchange of information among branches. In general, the communications planning model resulted in improved communications at all management levels, improved attitudes, and more effective meetings. Civilian/military interactions improved also.

5. Job Design. Workers were able to meet and work together as a group without management supervision. Workers' ideas helped to improve operations and planning functions. Worker participation in planning and controlling functions reduced alienation among workers.

6. Team Building was the most successful intervention technique and was made the key element of follow-on OD activity in MILPERCEN. Group problem solving was found effective with both military and civilian managers and resulted in greater cohesiveness among organizational functions. Interpersonal and intergroup issues were explored and resolved openly in an off-site conference environment.

Given the task of applying OD in another staff organization, SDC offers the following advice:

1. Ensure top-level management support. If top managers are personally involved, the effort progresses more smoothly.

2. Involve line managers. Decision making must involve line personnel in order to ensure that OD takes root throughout the organization.

3. Expend considerable time with first-level supervisors. The values and practices of first-level supervisors often conflict with the values and practices of OD. In many cases, significant insights have to occur before supervisors will understand and support developmental activities with worker groups.

4. Use outside consultants. The independence and professional expertise of the outside consultant provides greater leverage and influence. Internal consultants should also be developed to sustain the OD effort, but reliance on some outside support should continue for many years.

5. Focus on the use of structured task-oriented techniques. Because the Army is task-oriented, Team Building focused on work activities is well accepted, whereas T-group activities with emphasis on personalized learning are often resisted. Words such as "experimental," "feelings," and "interpersonal" raise eyebrows. Words such as "task," "goals," and "organizational improvements" draw nods of agreement.

In contrast to the rosy picture painted by SDC in 1974, by October 1988, the situation at MILPERCEN had changed significantly. OD was no longer an active program at MILPERCEN, and a management specialty in OD which was established in 1975 had been abolished. As recently reported to me by a senior Army official: "OD in the Army is gone." Very likely, personnel

turnover--especially in upper management--was a principal factor in the demise of OD in the Army. Within 18 months, an Army unit can lose 50% of its personnel; within 2 years, 100%.

Unless there is an internal training program and a dedication to the concept of OD at all levels of management, an OD program cannot be sustained. Neither MILPERCEN nor AFML had sufficient management consensus to sustain their OD programs, and many of the perceived changes in attitudes at MILPERCEN and AFML were probably only temporary changes in overt actions in response to pressure from upper management.

Temporary or not, there were reported improvements in organizational behavior and efficiency as a result of these OD programs. Dysfunctional competition decreased and communications increased among AFML OD participants. Morale, communications, and problem solving increased at MILPERCEN. Civilian and military interaction improved in both organizations. Thus, the Team Building intervention technique which was employed at each organization was at least a short-term success. The successes might have been more lasting had there been more effective internal training programs and sustained management support, especially at top levels of management.

VI. QUALIFICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Although the foregoing review indicates that, on balance, OD has been successful in improving organization effectiveness, there is little evidence to suggest that OD has been successful in changing long-term organizational behavior. In many instances, changes have been temporary, and usually only in response to upper management pressure. As a mechanism for institutionalizing cultural change in organizations, OD has yet to prove itself. Moreover, such proof will be difficult to come by since there are few reliable indices of organizational change, especially in the case of staff or "knowledge" organizations.

The inability to sustain OD programs in the long run has resulted from both managerial and worker resistance. Worker resistance can be observed in the form of open hostility, silent non-compliance, or just "waiting out" current management.

One reason many managers resist OD is that they do not accept one of its basic assumptions. They reject the assumption that for optimal organizational effectiveness, key executives and subordinates must be philosophically committed to a participative or democratic leadership style. They do not believe that people seek greater achievement and strive for more responsibility, challenge, and self-actualization (Huse, 1975). Instead, they believe that if an organization is operating effectively under authoritarian management, the case for implementing OD is weak. They have learned that many people are happier and perform as well under authoritative supervision as they do under democratic supervision (Dale, 1973). They are reluctant to delegate power and authority to people whom they believe are less capable and less likely to help the organization reach maximum efficiency and productivity. One way of addressing managers' resistance, of course, is to hire new managers. This by no means guarantees improved organizational effectiveness, however, and seems to violate the humanistic philosophy of OD.

Many workers also resist OD. They see it as a form of exploitation, as just another way of getting people to do what the boss wants done. Indeed, OD runs this risk, as Friedlander and Brown (1974) have pointed out:

OD . . . runs the risk of encouraging and implementing subtle but persuasive forms of exploitation, curtailment of freedom, control of personality, violation of dignity, intrusion of privacy--all in the name of science and of economic and technological efficiency OD may well be another organizational palliative, engaged in "making some people happier at the job of making other people richer!" (p. 335)

Practical experience has also been a factor in many people not wholly embracing the humanistic tenets of OD. For example, in 1964, Bennis contended that a bureaucratic/autocratic organization is dysfunctional in a rapidly changing environment because it is slow to act and does not draw on the talents of everyone. He concluded that only in a democratic system, in which government is by consensus rather than by coercion or compromise, can companies compete successfully in the future (Slater & Bennis, 1964). However, after his experience as an administrator at a university during a period of student disorders, Bennis began to have doubts. In an article published in 1970, he reported that in large organizations there are likely to be many competitive groups, often with diametrically opposed value systems, making consensus impossible. As Dale reports (1973, p. 437),

[Bennis'] experience made him realize that the excitement afforded by confrontations had more appeal to a great many people than the reasoned processes of democracy. He wondered whether "democratic functioning could ever develop the deep emotional commitments and satisfactions that other forms of government evoke, as for example, revolutionary--charismatic or ideological movements." He added: "The question which I leave with you at this time is not the one from the original paper ('Is democracy inevitable?') but, 'Is democracy sexy?'" (Bennis, 1970)

This change in attitude from the man who wrote Organizational Development: Its Nature, Origin and Prospects (Bennis, 1969) reflects the difficulties even the most ardent OD theorist can have when faced with the reality of human differences.

Even Douglas McGregor had a change of heart. At one time, he thought that a leader could operate successfully as a kind of advisor to the organization. He thought a leader could avoid being boss and be liked by everyone--that "good human relations" would eliminate all discord and disagreement. But after his experience as President of Antioch College, McGregor reported in 1954 that he could not have been more wrong (Dale, 1973, p. 436):

I finally began to realize that a leader cannot avoid the exercise of authority any more than he can avoid responsibility for what happens to his organization. Moreover, since no important decision ever pleases everyone in the organization, he must also absorb the displeasure, and sometimes severe hostility, of those who would have taken a different course. (McGregor, 1954)

These revealing experiences of two former OD proponents should temper the optimism of even the most ardent OD advocate.

There is little doubt that some people thrive on conflict, and others are so concerned with power and prestige that their behavior absolutely prohibits the successful achievement of open communication and cooperation in organizational activities. These practicalities must be considered in any assessment of the ultimate success of OD intervention techniques. Ethical considerations are also inherent in the application of OD. They include the nature of power, group values, and the ethical intentions of the change agent and upper management. Another philosophical issue raised by Ross (1971) is that "no amount of current OD work will overcome the basic characteristics of capitalism which include competition, power, privilege, and wealth" (Huse, 1975, p. 68). If this is so, then perhaps in a sense, OD is doomed before it starts. However, that is simply Huse's opinion, and not necessarily a valid reason for not making the attempt.

VII. SUMMARY

The concept and process of OD evolved from a progressively increasing concern for the welfare and personal satisfaction of people on the job. OD is an educational process designed to change organizational culture and to improve the total performance of an organization.

The process or methodology of OD is unique and differs from the typical management development program in that it is a continuing activity, rather than a short-term activity, and involves the whole organization, rather than a single individual. It is intended to improve both the traditional product output of an organization and the social and psychological climate of the organization. This organizational transformation is accomplished through the use of an internal or external behavioral scientist consultant, who prescribes intervention techniques for the organization to employ to help itself. These techniques are prescribed following a data gathering phase and a diagnostic phase which provide information for the consultant to use in judging where the organizational problems lie and which intervention techniques are most appropriate to solve those problems.

Organization Development has a specific set of values associated with it. These values concern the nature of man, and his work in an organizational context, and have been derived to a large degree from the values of the Human Relations Movement of the 1930's and the philosophies of Abraham Maslow and Douglas McGregor. Predominant in the OD value system is the notion that man is good, growing and trusting, and capable of self-discipline and creativity on the job. A concern of the humanist is that under the conditions of modern industrial life, man's potentialities are only partially realized; hence, the need for OD to improve the organizational climate.

Whether the values of OD accurately reflect the true nature of man is a moot point, but it has been suggested that acceptance of this humanistic point of view may be necessary for the successful application of OD. The belief that people are important, and that they can grow and develop in terms of personal and organizational competency, tends to produce this result.

The ultimate objective of OD is to change an organization such that both individual workers' needs and organizational needs can be met. It is presumed by the OD practitioner that product output will be qualitatively and quantitatively best under these conditions.

The results achieved by OD in terms of improving organizational effectiveness have been mixed, but on balance, have generally been positive. The effectiveness of intervention techniques depends on the consultant, the organization in which the technique is employed, and the specific problem being addressed. No simple rule can be given for selecting an appropriate intervention technique, nor are there adequate objective techniques for assessing the effectiveness of intervention techniques--thus, the difficulty in assessing their ultimate utility.

Organizational conditions which lead to the success of OD include pressure for organizational change, support from top management, short- and long-term goals, willingness to take risks, and tangible intermediate results. Failure often occurs because of an overdependence on the consultant, a gap between the goals of top and middle management, misapplication of intervention techniques, an absence of solid goals for change, and a tendency to confuse good interpersonal relations with successful OD.

Applications of OD in the Air Force and the Army have been successful only in the short term because of high personnel turnover, resistance by some participants, and a failure to institutionalize the process through continuing education. OD in the Department of Defense should begin with top management, and change goals should be pursued through the use of Team

Training. Expected results might be improved morale among OD participants, improved communications, and better teamwork. However, resistance can also be expected, especially from non-participants and autocratic-style managers with firmly fixed opinions.

Although OD may be beneficial for some organizations, it may be ineffective in others. According to some of the OD literature, some workers thrive on conflict and/or authoritative supervision, and some managers are so concerned with power and prestige that their behavior prohibits the successful achievement of open communications and cooperation in organizational activities. In such organizations, a compromise must first be achieved between workers and management.

Organization Development as it presently exists may be nothing more than a convenient label for a conglomeration of management activities. Nevertheless, it represents a point in the evolution and integration of management techniques which could ultimately lead to more effective organizational structures and procedures.

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